



## quarterly news

**Guest Contributor:**

**Brett Hamm**  
*Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan*

**The following publications are available upon request:**

- **Patterns of Global Terrorism**
- **Supporting Human Rights and Democracy**
- **Trafficking in Persons Report**
- **Consular Notification and Access**
- **IGA: Working with State and Local Governments**
- **Key Officers of Foreign Service Posts**
- **U.S. Department of State: A Guide to Doing Business**
- **Country Background Notes**
- **Travel Tips for Students**
- **Travel Warnings**



Spring 2006

**Message from the Director**

Looking back at my first couple of months at the Department of State (DoS), I am amazed by the domestic and international impact of this building's diplomatic and policy work. The lives touched by the policies created here exceed anything I imagined when I first started.

For example, the DoS has a program through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs that invites students from all over the world to come to the United States and learn about democracy, our government, and our diverse culture. While the students are participating in this year-long program, IGA often helps them arrange meetings with local elected officials. I encourage you to meet with as many of these dynamic young people as possible. Many of them have never been exposed to democracy in action, and a small amount of your time may help change the future of another country.

Another initiative designed to greatly increase the security of Americans is the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI). WHTI is mandated by Congress and will require every American to have a passport, or a new, less expensive mini-passport, to travel to and from the Americas (including Canada and Mexico), the Caribbean and Bermuda. IGA is available to take your questions about WHTI. *Stay tuned for this summer's federal register posting, which will announce the public comment period before the final WHTI policy roll out. During the public comment period you can submit comments or suggestions that will be considered when the rules for WHTI are finalized.*

I look forward to serving you. Please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone in IGA whenever you have an issue, concern or problem. I am excited about working here and hope we can solve problems together!

*Anthony Welcher, Director, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs*

**Global Support for Gulf Coast Victims**

The United States is grateful for each offer of assistance received from the international community following hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Countries around the world volunteered material and manpower, and pledged over \$800 million in cash to help Americans affected by the disasters.

Following the hurricanes, the Department of State acted as the primary link between the U.S. and the international community, and also worked closely with foreign donors to collect monetary assistance. The United States received over 152 offers of assistance from international organizations and countries around the globe. Last fall, the State Department transferred \$66 million in foreign financial donations to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The generosity and compassion extended to the people of the United States by international organizations, individuals and governments is greatly appreciated. The names of the countries and international groups that reached out to the U.S. in the aftermath of the hurricanes are listed on the next page. ■



## Countries and International Organizations that Offered Support for Gulf Coast Victims

Afghanistan	Chile	Gabon	Kenya	Nicaragua	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ukraine
Albania	China	Georgia	Republic of Korea	Nigeria	Grenadines	UN Disaster Assistance and Coordination
Andorra	Colombia	Germany	Kosovo	Norway	Samoa	UN Food & Agriculture Organization
Angola	Costa Rica	Ghana	Kuwait	Organization of American States (OAS)	Sao Tome and Principe	UN Office of Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs
Argentina	Croatia	Greece	Laos	Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)	Saudi Arabia	UN Habitat
Armenia	Cuba	Guatemala	Latvia	Pakistan	Senegal	UNICEF
Australia	Cyprus	Guinea	Liberia	Palau	Serbia and Montenegro	United Arab Emirates
Austria	Czech Republic	Guyana	Libya	Palestinian Authority	Singapore	United Kingdom
Azerbaijan	Denmark	Haiti	Lithuania	Panama	Slovak Republic	Uruguay
The Bahamas	Djibouti	Honduras	Luxembourg	Papua New Guinea	Slovenia	Venezuela
Bahrain	Dominica	Hungary	Macedonia	Paraguay	South Africa	Vietnam
Bangladesh	Dominican Republic	Iceland	Malaysia	Peru	Spain	World Health Organization (WHO)
Barbados	Ecuador	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Maldives	Philippines	Sri Lanka	World Food Program
Belarus	Egypt	India	Malta	Poland	Sweden	Yemen
Belgium	El Salvador	Indonesia	Mauritania	Portugal	Switzerland	
Bolivia	Equatorial Guinea	Iraq	Mexico	Qatar	Taiwan	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Estonia	Ireland	Micronesia	Romania	Thailand	
Botswana	Ethiopia	Israel	Mongolia	Russia	Togo	
Brazil	European Commission	Italy	Morocco	Rwanda	Trinidad and Tobago	
Brunei	Fiji Islands	Jamaica	Namibia		Tunisia	
Bulgaria	Finland	Japan	NATO		Turkey	
Cambodia	France	Jordan	Nepal		Uganda	
Cameroon	French Polynesia	Kazakhstan	Netherlands			
Canada			New Zealand			

## Global Efforts To Combat Avian Flu Intensify

Preventing the pandemic spread of avian influenza, or “bird flu,” is a top priority for the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza.

The Partnership, which consists of representatives from 88 countries and nine international organizations, recently gathered at the U.S. Department of State to construct what Secretary of Health and Human Services Michael Leavitt calls a “web of defense” against the avian flu.

In an effort to protect the world from the spread of a deadly epidemic, the group has identified three priority areas for collaboration: building stockpiles of drugs and supplies; speeding vaccine development and distribution; and implementing rapid response and containment measures.

“The Partnership requires countries that face an outbreak to immediately share information and provide samples to the World Health Organization,” President Bush said when he announced the formation of the group at the 2005 United Nations General Assembly. “By requiring transparency, we can respond more rapidly to dangerous outbreaks and stop them on time.”

Avian influenza is a naturally occurring viral disease that is highly contagious among birds. Contact with infected wild birds, which often carry the virus but usually do not get sick from it, spreads the infection to domesticated fowl such as chicken, ducks, and turkey. Humans can also become infected this way.\*

To date, outbreaks of the H5N1 strain of influenza have been confirmed among birds in nearly 50 countries. According to the



A poster warns travelers about the threat of avian influenza at the airport of Nice, southeastern France.

World Health Organization there have been over 200 reported cases of the avian flu in humans between December 2003 and April 2006. Human cases of the virus have resulted in over 100 deaths in Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, China, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Iraq, Thailand, and Turkey.

“If left unchallenged, this virus could become the first pandemic of the 21st century,” said President Bush. “It’s essential we work together, and as we do so, we will fulfill a moral duty to protect our citizens, and heal the sick, and comfort the afflicted.”

To find out more about avian influenza and its potential threat to global health, check the World Health Organization’s website, <http://www.who.int/en/>, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), or [PandemicFlu.gov](http://PandemicFlu.gov). ■

\*From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization





Under Secretary for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs Josette S. Shiner meets with President-elect Rene Préval in Port-Au-Prince. Under Secretary Shiner traveled to Haiti from 24-25 March to meet with President-elect Préval.

"Haitians should be proud of their recent successful presidential elections," Under Secretary Shiner remarked. "Not only does the United States stand ready to support Haitian democracy, we also want to help Haiti develop its economy, so as to provide hope and opportunity to the Haitian people." ■

## Democracy Building Around the Globe: Focus on HAITI

The Republic of Haiti moved one step closer to democracy during its February 2006 presidential and parliamentary elections.

Rene Préval, who has previously served as prime minister and president of Haiti, was elected president. Haitian citizens also cast ballots to select 129 members of the country's parliamentary body.

The United States strongly supports Haiti's efforts to build a viable democracy and is working to help the country develop its economy. Over the last three years, the U.S. has donated over \$500 million in assistance to Haiti to strengthen democratic governance, meet humanitarian needs, improve security, and foster economic growth.

In March, Josette Shiner, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, visited Haiti where she met with President-elect Préval, international development organizations, and business leaders to promote economic growth and opportunity.

## America's Pandemic Strategy *U.S. Prepares To Combat Bird Flu*

President Bush has outlined a national strategy to safeguard against the danger of an influenza pandemic. Emergency funding in the amount of \$7.1 billion has been requested in order to immediately implement the three-part plan.

### DETECTION of human or animal outbreaks that occur anywhere in the world

Early detection is the first line of defense against avian flu. The International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza is a network of global surveillance and preparedness that will help detect and quickly respond to any outbreaks of disease. The new National Bio-Surveillance Initiative will rapidly detect, quantify and respond to outbreaks of disease - and deliver information to local state, national and international public health officials. Improved surveillance will help stop, slow or limit the spread of a pandemic.

### DEVELOPMENT and STOCKPILING of vaccines and antiviral medications

It is very difficult to produce a vaccine for a new viral stain before a sample of it is available to researchers. To help protect Americans during the early stage of an outbreak when it is possible that no vaccine is available, the government is

supporting the development of new vaccines that would offer some protection and save many lives at the onset of an outbreak.

The Administration is working to strengthen the Nation's pharmaceutical industry to ensure that there are enough vaccines for every American. Due to litigation, the number of U.S. vaccine manufacturers has plummeted; Congress is urged to pass liability protection for the makers of life-saving vaccines. The President has also requested \$1 billion to stockpile enough antiviral medication to treat the nation's first responders and populations most at risk during the primary stages of an epidemic.



A lawmaker reads a chart on the impact of an avian flu pandemic during testimony on preparing for the avian flu.

### COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

To prepare for a pandemic, all 50 states and every local community must have emergency plans in place. The President's strategy sets aside \$100 million to help states complete and exercise their own pandemic flu plans. Health and Human Services Secretary (HHS) Michael Leavitt will bring together state and local public health officials to discuss tactics for managing a pandemic. The Federal Government is also stockpiling critical medical supplies and HHS is helping states create rosters of medical personnel who can rapidly respond to a pandemic emergency. ■

## The World's Youth: Learning (and Loving!) America

How are Wisconsin's Circuit Courts different from its Supreme Court? It's very likely that Zeina Thawableh of Jordan and Alyona Golubovich of Kazakhstan know the answer. The young women discussed the judicial system and other aspects of U.S. democracy with Wisconsin Justice David Prosser in April 2006.

Zeina and Alyona are among hundreds of high school international exchange students who meet with American state and local elected officials every year. IGA actively encourages these meetings, hoping the lessons learned will leave students forever changed.

That's exactly what happened to Maral Jumayeva of Turkmenistan, after she was invited to join the State Department's Future Leaders Exchange Program for the 2005-2006 academic year. Maral met Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski and State Senate Majority Leader Ben Stevens on March 20, 2006, and called it one of the most exciting days of her life.



International exchange students from six countries got an up-close look at how democracy works when they spent time with Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice David Prosser.

*"It was unreal for me because I thought those people were too busy," Maral, who is spending the year living with an American family in Anchorage, said. "I like the USA so much, it seems like all my dreams will come true."*

Those dreams include becoming a leader in Turkmenistan society, later in the 21st century.

*"I'm ready to make successful changes for my lovely country," Maral said. "I am a future leader." ■*

## Leaders Meet To Discuss America's Mideast Policy

Elected and appointed American leaders of Middle Eastern descent gathered in Washington, DC on April 5 to participate in the nation's first Middle Eastern-American Leadership Assembly. The group was briefed by top U.S. policy makers on U.S. objectives for the broader Middle East and North African region. The Assembly, which was developed by the Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development, included briefings and discussions on U.S. Middle East political issues, national security, and public diplomacy, led by representatives from the White House, State Department and USAID.



## SPOTLIGHT: America Continues To Help Survivors of South Asia's 2005 Earthquake

On October 8, 2005 a massive, deadly earthquake struck three South Asian countries, claiming more than 140,000 lives in Pakistan alone. India and Afghanistan were also greatly affected. The 7.6 magnitude quake hit only weeks before winter set in, raising the danger that many of the millions left homeless would freeze to death.

### *What Has America Done To Help?*

U.S. military helicopters swooped onto the scene mere hours after the quake struck, delivering needed medical supplies. They also transported thousands of victims out of harm's way. Altogether, the U.S. Government has pledged more than \$510 million, providing warm shelter, food, water and other humanitarian aid.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has helped villagers rebuild pipes, which are delivering fresh spring water to villagers. USAID also worked with village elders to open schools for children in relief camps, and developed a centralized computer system to monitor and track relief efforts.

### *What Else Is Being Done?*

The United States will remain active in South Asian reconstruction efforts. U.S. Government funds will help rebuild communities devastated by the disaster. Humanitarian aid will also continue to be distributed. Entrepreneurial programs will help create jobs. The U.S. is also working with other donor nations to meet South Asia's other long-term needs.

### *Are We Making a Difference?*

Without America's immediate and long-term involvement, human suffering in this devastated region would have been much worse. Earthquake survivors are deeply grateful to the American people for their support. For a first-hand account of their gratitude, visit: <http://www.usaid.gov/stories/index.html>.

### *How Can I Help?*

In addition to government assistance, individual Americans and corporations have generously contributed to disaster relief efforts. For more information on private donations, visit: <http://www.southasiaearthquake relief.org>. ■



## Freedom in Afghanistan

He was a short, simple man who stood tall wearing his best suit and a proud smile. Rising early to ensure his first-place spot in line, he heroically held up what the Taliban never intended to see: his voter registration card. After weathering war after war, this was the day Afghans had dreamed of – the day Afghanistan would finally become their own with a democratically elected president and parliament finally in place.

In October 2001, American military forces began Operation Enduring Freedom. Within months, significant results were achieved. Over 3 million children returned to classrooms, a third of them girls attending school for the first time in their lives.

By October 2004, Afghanistan elected its first president in its 5,000-year history. In September, Afghans completed this new democracy by electing their first parliament after three decades of violent rule.

Especially historic in these elections was that women, for the first time, would seek public office in the National Assembly and Provincial Councils. Women, who couldn't so much as leave their home without a male relative, go to school, or even see a doctor under Taliban rule would participate in creating the laws of their land. In fact, the Afghan constitution requires that women hold one-quarter of the seats in the National Assembly.

The International Republican Institute (IRI), based in Washington, DC, organized the only U.S. delegation to officially observe the elections. I accepted an opportunity to join the 16-member team.

My decision was not easy. Numerous candidates had been assassinated, newly registered voters beaten, and the Taliban still promised a "significant event" prior to the September 18 election day. But I believe a democratic Afghanistan creates a safer America by leaving one less country where terrorists have room to plot their end to our way of life.



An Afghan child observes democracy in action on September 18.

The purpose of our mission was to ensure a free, fair and credible election. One candidate in particular, stands out in my mind. She was a bold 26-year old female from Kabul who passionately announced to reporters that regardless of her election, she would not stop until "all Afghan women have rights to education and health care."

Traveling to over 100 polling stations throughout Kabul, my partner, an IRI staff member, and I would monitor for signs of fraud, voter abuse and intimidation as other U.S. teams fanned out to more than 1200 polling stations in 16 provinces.

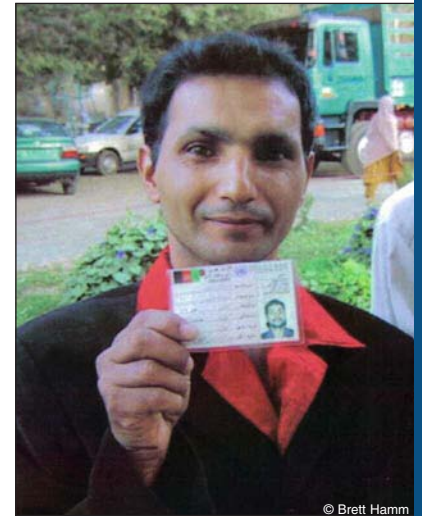
Despite reports of a rocket-propelled grenade launched at the UN compound in Kabul and of several killed in other cities, our day went without harm. There was no doubt though after talking with so many Afghans passionate about their new democracy, that the freedom they seek today is the surest path to my children's safety from the terrorists of tomorrow. In Afghanistan's democracy, there will be no breeding ground for those who look to blame the West. Instead, Afghans I spoke with recognized that freedom puts responsibility where it should be – in their own hands.

Many Afghans carried that responsibility to the polls, handing over their voter registration card in exchange for a ballot and a new way of life, each of them "rebels" against the Taliban's threats of violence to those who dared vote.

Our observation mission ultimately found this landmark election to be carried out in a fair, professional manner. In fact, we were impressed by how seriously each and every Afghan took their role in the process. Each determined to ensure success; they had seen enough failure.

It is a long road ahead to the Afghanistan they work to achieve, and as our own history has shown, there will be challenges and critics ahead. With this election serving as a testament to the courage and resilience of the Afghan people, their determination to ensure free and fair elections was a clear statement that in the end, where tyranny once stood, freedom will endure. ■

*The writer, Brett Hamm, is the former Assistant to Mayor Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City.*



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A young Afghan proudly displays his voter registration card. Afghanistan held its first free parliamentary elections on September 18.

## U.S. Elected Officials Abroad

### October 2005

**Panama:** Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio led trade mission.

**Mexico:** Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne led trade mission.

**China:** A delegation from the U.S. Conference of Mayors met with colleagues from the China Association of Mayors; Milwaukee Mayor Thomas M. Barrett trade mission to Beijing, Shanghai and Ningbo; Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius led trade mission to China.

**Germany, Czech Republic, Ukraine:** New Hampshire Governor Lynch led trade mission to expand his state's overseas markets.

**Japan:** Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen led trade mission; Alabama Governor Bob Riley led trade mission.

**France, England, Germany:** Ohio Governor Bob Taft led trade mission.

**South Africa:** National Conference of State Legislatures Officers' study tour.

**Cuba:** Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman's second trade mission to Cuba.

**France, Czech Republic:** A delegation from the American Legislative Exchange Council met with business and government leaders in Strasbourg and Prague.

**China, South Korea, Japan:** Gresham, Oregon Mayor Charles J. Becker and Councilor Paul Warr-King led trade mission.

### November 2005

**Israel:** Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue led trade mission.

**Czech Republic, Poland:** Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle led trade mission.

**Argentina, Chile:** Wisconsin Governor Bill Owens led trade mission.

**China:** Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty led trade mission; California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger led trade mission.

**Germany, Switzerland:** Florida Governor Jeb Bush led trade mission.

### December 2005

**China:** Ohio Lt. Governor Bruce Johnson led trade mission.

**Mexico:** Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne led trade mission; Missouri Governor Matt Blunt led trade mission.

### January 2006

**Ireland:** Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett led trade mission.

### March 2006

**Australia:** North Dakota Lt. Governor Jack Dalrymple led trade mission.

**India:** Iowa Governor Jack Vilsack led trade mission.

### April 2006

**China:** Minnesota Lt. Governor Carol Molnau led delegation.

**Cuba:** Nebraska Lt. Governor Rich Sheehy led delegation.

**Germany:** Ohio Governor Bob Taft attended a trade fair in Hannover.

## About the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs

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## IGA on the Horizon

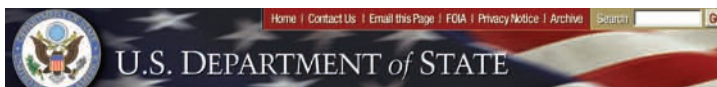
*Be sure to check this section each quarter for updates...*

### JUNE 2006

- 2-6 U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, Nevada
- 27-30 National Association of Attorneys General Summer Meeting, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

### JULY 2006

- 17-19 National Lieutenant Governors Association, Annual Meeting, Seattle, Washington
- 19-23 American Legislative Exchange Council Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California



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